

October 18, 1962

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION ON OCTOBER 18, AT LUNCHEON
AT DCI's RESIDENCE.

25X1

25X1 Attending were: Mr. McCone, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED], Mr. Ray Cline, Mr. George McManus, and Mr.
Elder.

25X1 After a general conversation about topics including the Intel-
ligence Methods Conference, the specific question was posed as to
what was going on in connection with the Soviet build-up in Cuba. The
[REDACTED] examined closely the question of whether the Soviets were
complying with Castro's request, or whether the Soviets were acting
in their own interest. The consensus was that this was a deliberate
Soviet policy decision taken earlier this year, and that the military
25X1 build-up, insofar as [REDACTED] information was concerned,
was of a nature to advance Soviet political objectives, which were not
very carefully defined.

25X1 The question was put to [REDACTED] on a purely hypothetical
basis as to whether the build-up of defensive weapons was not but a
prelude to the secret introduction of some kind of an offensive capability.
25X1 This hypothesis was hard for [REDACTED] to accept and they explored
several alternatives, including the positioning of Soviet intelligence
collection equipment.

After extended discussions the question was transformed
into the hypothetical issue of what action the United States might be
forced to take should the Soviets install an offensive capability in
Cuba. The answer by [REDACTED] was
25X1 direct and explicit. They said that as far as America's allies were
concerned, if the United States could produce hard provable evidence
of a Soviet offensive capability in Cuba directed against American
targets, then the reaction of our allies to U.S. action would be very
different.

25X1 My own impression of the discussion was that [REDACTED]
had not seriously considered the possibility and the implications of a
Soviet offensive capability in Cuba but were now prepared to consider
this possibility. Moreover, the revelation to them of hard evidence
would have a tremendous impact on their current thinking.

Walter Elder

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